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FROM THE SENATE INTERNAL SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE

The following testimony, taken December 18 by the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, from Yuri Rastvorov, former Soviet Secret Service agent in Japan, where he was Third Secretary of the Soviet Mission when he defected in 1954 to the United States, was ordered distributed today by Senator William E. Jenner (R-Ind) who presided.

SCOPE OF SOVIET ACTIVITY IN THE UNITED STATES

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Tuesday, December 18, 1956

United States Senate,

Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration
of the Internal Security Act and Other
Internal Security Laws, of the
Committee on the Judiciary,
Washington, D. C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:35 o'clock p.m., in the office of Senator William E. Jenner, Senate Office Building.

Present: Senator Jenner (presiding)...

Also present: Robert Morris, Chief Counsel.

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Senator Jenner. Mr. Rastvorov, do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. Rastvorov. I do.

Mr. Morris. Senator, at the last appearance of Mr. Rastvorov before the Senate Subcommittee, he told us in his testimony that he knew Sergei Tikhvinsky as a member of the NKVD, an official whose job it was, according to his own direct knowledge, to recruit Japanese prisoners into the Soviet apparatus and then send them back into Japan, and at the time of his appearance he said Mr. Tikhvinski had just been appointed by the Soviet Government as the head of the official trade mission to Japan and it was thought at that time that he would be the Soviet Ambassador to Japan.

Now, from our point of view, it was an extremely important intelligence development, that we have the spectacle of a man that trains Japanese into Communist agents from among Japanese prisoners, send them back to Japan after they are trained, and then that he be sent there as the head of a mission, so that he is in a foreign country working with agents of his own organizing and training.

Now, in following up the particular point, we noticed here last week that the son of Prince Konoye died in a Japanese prison camp, and we asked Mr. Rastvorov if he knew anything about that particular development and he said he did, and we are asking him to give testimony on that particular subject.

TESTIMONY OF YURI RASTVOROV

Mr. Morris. What do you know about the son of Prince Konoye?

Mr. Rastvorov. The Soviet Intelligence Service had a very special group organized in 1947, 1948, to recruit a number of Japanese prisoners of war held

in prison camps all over the Soviet Union --

Mr. Morris. Excuse me. What position did you occupy at that time? You were then in the Soviet Military Intelligence?

Mr. Rastvorov. At that time I was an officer of the MVD. I myself was engaged in the recruiting of Japanese prisoners of war.

The Soviet Intelligence Service was interested in Japanese prisoners who occupied important positions in their country, as I testified before. All of those people were targets for recruitment. Among them were several prominent Japanese, including the son of Prince Konoye. Officers whom I know personally, for instance, Colonel Vashkin, participated in the attempt to recruit him.

The son of Prince Konoye, in spite of the persistent attempts to recruit him, did not collaborate, and refused to act as an agent of the Soviet Intelligence Service in Japan.

Mr. Morris. There were offers that he would be repatriated if --

Senator Jenner. If he collaborated?

Mr. Rastvorov. If he collaborated, but he would not. After they failed in their recruitment attempt, they tried him and sentenced him as a war criminal. I don't know what the sentence was, but he would get a long term in prison.

Mr. Morris. How do you know that, Mr. Rastvorov?

Mr. Rastvorov. I know it from people who were engaged in this operation.

This man I mentioned, a Colonel Vashkin, participated in the attempted recruitment of the son of Prince Konoye. I know Vashkin personally; when he was in Tokyo I worked with him. He was chief of the MVD group in Tokyo, where he worked under the cover name of Volgin.

Mr. Morris. And what was his cover assignment?

Mr. Rastvorov. His cover assignment was Chief of Consulate of the Soviet Mission in Japan.

To continue, I learned from Vashkin and others that the Soviet Government refused to free the son of Prince Konoye, and decided to keep him in the Soviet Union in order to avoid revelation of all that had happened to him in connection with attempts to recruit him. The Soviets realized the reaction of the Japanese people and people of the Free World if Prince Konoye revealed his experiences, so he was sentenced as a war criminal and, I assume, reduced to living conditions which would shorten his life, following the principle that "Dead men tell no tales."

Mr. Morris. That is an assumption on your part, that they deliberately shortened his life?

Mr. Rastvorov. Yes, that is my assumption on this particular case, based on my personal experience in the MVD.

Mr. Morris. Now, are there any developments since our last session about Sergei Tikhvinsky.

Mr. Rastvorov. No, I don't know all the recent details about Tikhvinsky. I know only that he continued to stay in Tokyo in spite of the fact that the Japanese knew his real assignment is to expand Soviet intelligence operations in Japan, and to recruit new agents, to replace those who were uncovered by my defection.

Mr. Morris. Now, Mr. Rastvorov, since your last testimony there have been reports that Colonel General Serov, who I think you told us is the ranking MVD officer now --

Mr. Rastvorov. Yes; the press announced the appearance in Hungary of General Serov, Chairman of the KGB, formerly called the MVD. He was appointed Chairman of the KGB after the arrest of Beria, and since then has held this position. Previously, in 1943, he headed the special task force which was engaged in the deportation of national minorities in the Soviet Union from the Caucasus area, such as the Kalmiks, Chichans, Ingushi, Crimean Tartars from their homeland to the interior of the country, mainly to Kazakhstan.

Mr. Morris. In other words, in 1943 his assignment was to specialize in mass deportations and mass relocations of populations?

Mr. Rastvorov. He was in charge of the operation.

Mr. Morris. How do you know that?

Mr. Rastvorov. Because I participated myself.

Mr. Morris. With him?

Mr. Rastvorov. Yes.

Mr. Morris. And what was his rank at that time?

Mr. Rastvorov. At that time, he held the same rank, General, and was Deputy of the Minister of MVD.

Mr. Morris. What was your rank at that time?

Mr. Rastvorov. At that time, I was a Captain.

Mr. Morris. And you were one of his assistants, and therefore you knew?

Mr. Rastvorov. No, I was not one of his personal assistants. I was a member of a huge group established for the deportations, of national minorities.

Senator Jenner. You were an officer in that?

Mr. Rastvorov. Yes.

Mr. Morris. And General Serov is now in Hungary?

Mr. Rastvorov. According to newspaper reports, which have been confirmed several times.

Mr. Morris. Senator Jenner, the Internal Security Subcommittee today took testimony from several Hungarians who have been in the country less than a week, that they witnessed and experienced the efforts on the part of the Soviet Union to effect extensive deportations from Hungary to the Soviet Union, and in view of that development and the reported arrival of General Serov there, we were particularly interested in getting Mr. Rastvorov's testimony about this specialty of Serov.

Mr. Rastvorov. For that particular job -- to continue my statement -- after the successful deportation of the whole population from one area to another he was awarded several decorations.

Serov also was head of a special group which was organized after the defeat of Germany. The task of this group was to arrest and deport to the Soviet Union so-called Fascist elements and anti-Soviet persons. This also involved rounding up German scientists, especially nuclear scientists, who now are helping them to build atomic weapons in the Soviet Union.

For all of these operations he was decorated as a Hero of the Soviet Union.

Mr. Morris. And you know all of this from your own experience.

Mr. Rastvorov. From my own experience, yes.

Serov was also in charge of the liquidation of rebel groups in The Ukraine who fought against the Soviet regime during and after the war.

I can add also that Serov was called the master of deportation, because of his experience in this particular job. I also have assumed because of my experience as a former NKVD officer that the Soviet Government sent him to Hungary to liquidate revolutionary resistance against the Soviets who dominate Hungary and would like to add that special MVD divisions, called Divisions of Special Assignment, were established during the war and participated in the liquidation of these nationalistic groups in The Ukraine and the deportation of minorities from their homelands. I assume that these Divisions are now active in Hungary, along with Soviet Army units.

Mr. Morris. Do you know Ambassador Rodionov?

Mr. Rastvorov. He is an Admiral of the Soviet Navy. He was appointed as Ambassador to Sweden in 1948 or 1949.

Originally, he was one of the deputies of the Chairman of the Committee for information, and I worked under him at that particular time.

He went to Sweden as the Ambassador of the Soviet Union, and stayed there until recently, when he was forced to leave by the pressure of Swedish public opinion, in connection with his espionage activity in that country.

He started in this profession in the early 1940s, as one of the leading figures of the Navy Intelligence Service of the Soviet Union --

Mr. Morris. Was he head of the Navy Intelligence Service?

Mr. Rastvorov. Yes, at one time before the establishment of the Committee of Information.

In 1948, after the merger of all the military intelligence services of the Soviet Union and the intelligence service of the MVD, he was appointed a deputy of the Chairman for the Committee on Information. At that time, the chairman of the Committee of Information was Molotov, who was succeeded by Vishinsky and then by Zorin, former Ambassador to Bonn.

Mr. Morris. So Zorin, too, was an Intelligence man acting under diplomatic cover?

Mr. Rastvorov. Yes, he worked as an intelligence officer under diplomatic cover in Germany.

Mr. Morris. And I think that you told us previously that Ambassador Panyushkin was, to your knowledge, a high ranking official of the Soviet intelligence service.

Mr. Rastvorov. Yes; I know him personally as a high ranking intelligence officer.

Mr. Morris. What was his military rank?

Mr. Rastvorov. He was a Major General, and after he returned to the Soviet Union he was appointed as a deputy of the Chief of the Foreign Directorate of the Central Committee of the Communist Party -- we can say that this Directorate is the same thing as the Comintern -- in other words, it functions as a clandestine Comintern.

Senator Jenner. Was the Comintern dissolved during the war?

Mr. Rastvorov. Yes, it was.

Senator Jenner. Well, was it actually dissolved?

Mr. Rastvorov. No, not actually. Only nominally.

Senator Jenner. It went ahead functioning?

Mr. Rastvorov. Yes, just the same, basically.

Mr. Morris. In fact, is there any difference whatever in their activities before the so-called dissolution, and after dissolution?

Mr. Rastvorov. No; they continued to work the same way, using the same methods.

Mr. Morris. Mr. Rastvorov, it has been suggested that the present policy of the United States vis-a-vis the Soviet Union at this time should be one of assisting the Soviets in effecting a series of detachments of the satellites from the Soviet Union. The United States Government is being urged to lend its good offices to aiding the Soviet Union in negotiating these detachments of the satellites from the Soviet Union and that by so doing we would be contributing to the peace of the world. The reason for all of this being that the satellites have become a liability to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Rastvorov. Well --

Mr. Morris. Let me finish.

Based on your long experience as a Communist and particularly as an officer of political intelligence, can you tell us what your analysis is of events in the satellites and generally the meaning of Soviet policies.

Mr. Rastvorov. The Western world has welcomed de-Stalinization with a mixture of confusion and wishful thinking, the recent form of which may be more aptly termed an indulgence in "great expectations". The belief that the present Kremlin leadership has inaugurated a departure from Stalinist terror and brutality has been destroyed by the recent events in Eastern Europe.

A key to the present situation was Khrushchev's conditional condemnation of Stalin for such acts as the extermination of many leading old Bolsheviks, while conveniently ignoring the forced collectivization of the Russian peasantry through mass annihilation. The practical nature of the Communist system was thereby shown. A leader was condemned for certain errors alone, his general policy of oppression was not rejected, in either internal or external matters. As far as the latter is concerned, the expansionist policies of the Soviet Union were entirely in keeping with Lenin's philosophy, and certainly not attributable to Stalin alone. The present leaders of the Kremlin will continue to advocate the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, without the limitations imposed on them by the reactionary brutality of Stalin.

De-Stalinization can be considered as the basis of the policy being applied at present by the Soviet regime in its efforts to seek new, flexible political forms in relationship to its own people, the Satellite populations, and the inhabitants of the Western world. This has been made necessary by the realization that there is evolving a growing opposition to Communism and its leadership. The denunciation of Stalin was forced by the realization that his methods, essentially rigid and reactionary, were not consistently applicable in present circumstances. They have realized that a more elastic political form was long overdue, in which they could appeal to the wishes of the populace by the institution to temporary and artificial reforms. This must be recognized as not being a departure from the basic principle of control, the very essence of the Soviet system.

The entire program of de-Stalinization has been projected on a barrage of propaganda designed to create the illusion of the advent of a new era devoted to the pure form of Communism. However, so-called de-Stalinization does not mean a departure from the central theme of Communism, the basic tenet of which is "the dictatorship of the proletariat", or more correctly stated, "dictatorship of the party henchmen over the working masses". This dictatorship is impossible without the application of the identical methods of Stalin - terror and oppression. This same resort to violence will be found in the new, flexible political policies of the collective leadership. A perfect example of the application of this flexibility can be shown in the developments in Poland and Hungary. In the first case, control has been maintained by the application of this rapid political maneuvering called for in Leninism, the use of the principle of retreat in order to regroup and reorganize preparatory to advancing. The political and economic domination of Poland by the Soviet Union is unchallenged to this moment, despite the liberal reforms attributed to the Gomulka regime. Should the situation in Poland have presented an opportunity for the emergence of an opposition party, the Soviets would not have hesitated in the application of the violent elements of their new policy of flexibility.

In the case of Hungary, the world has witnessed a perfect example of the more practical aspects of the new Soviet flexibility. Unencumbered by moral principles, the Soviet regime set about systematically to liquidate an entire nation. The Kremlin leadership quickly recognized the appearance of new political forces, representing a fatal threat to the strategic position of the Soviet Union in Hungary. The end result was inevitable. Despite resolutions of condemnation, protestations and appeals to moral principles, I believe that the Kremlin leadership under no circumstances will relent from its complete domination of Hungary. In reference to the possibilities of liberating Eastern Europe by peaceful means, may I quote Khrushchev, to the effect that the Soviet Union will depart from the principles of Marxism-Leninism when "the shrimp learns to whistle". The Western world must recognize that de-Stalinization is nothing more than a reaffirmation of the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, and is essentially a much more cynical and complete system, embodying both the ruthless oppression of Stalin and the more subtle means of political manipulation.

Keeping this situation in mind, I believe that the Kremlin, in spite of its sabre-rattling, is genuinely concerned with the preservation of peace - for a limited time. It must be noted, however, that peace is desired by the Soviets and the Western world for completely different reasons. The high ideals of the West fit precisely with the practical considerations of the Kremlin. The biggest factor in the planning of the Soviet Union is time. They need time to build, time to consolidate and time to establish a state of preparedness from which they can enter the inevitable and reasonable hope of success.